



PANDEMIC INFLUENZA U•P•D•A•T•E



Public Health Prepares

May 2007

Fast Facts

CDC and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration have issued guidance on the use of masks and respirators in an influenza pandemic.

What is a facemask ?

Facemasks are loose-fitting, disposable masks that cover the nose and mouth. These include products labeled as surgical, dental, medical procedure, isolation, and laser masks.



Facemasks help stop droplets from being spread by the person wearing them. They also keep splashes or sprays from reaching the mouth and nose of the person wearing the facemask. They are not designed to protect you against breathing in very small particles.

What is a respirator?

A respirator is designed to protect you from breathing in very small particles, which might contain viruses. These types of respirators fit tightly to the face so that most air is inhaled through the filter material. To work most effectively, respirators must be specially fitted for each person who wears one. N95 respirators are most commonly used in construction and other jobs that involve dust and small particles.



For more information facemasks and respirators, see [Appendix B](#) of *Interim Guidance on Planning for the Use of Surgical Masks and Respirators in Health Care Settings during an Influenza Pandemic*.

If You Are Asked . . .

How bad will the next influenza pandemic be?

It all depends on how seriously ill the pandemic virus makes people, how rapidly the virus can spread from community to community, and the effectiveness of pandemic preparedness and response efforts.

The 1918 pandemic is an example of a worst-case scenario because the strain was highly contagious and quite deadly. That pandemic killed more Americans than all the wars of the 20th century. Since our world today is vastly more populated, and people now can travel the globe with ease. The next pandemic could be more rapid than in previous pandemics.

While it's upsetting enough to think about how many people could die, the impact of a pandemic must be considered in other ways too. After all, if millions of people became sick at the same time, major social consequences will occur. For example, if many doctors and nurses become ill, it will be even more difficult to care for the sick.

The National Institutes of Health recently concluded a historical analysis using the 1918 pandemic to help plan for future pandemics. You can read more about it on Page 3, [or visit the site for more information](#).

Public Health Prepares

FDA Clears First Respirators for Use in Public Health Medical Emergencies

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) cleared for marketing May 8, 2007, the first respirators that can help reduce the user's exposure to airborne germs

during a public health medical emergency, such as an influenza pandemic.

These two filtering face-piece respirators, manufactured by St. Paul, Minn.-based 3M Company (and called the 3M Respirator 8612F and 8670F), will be available to the general public without a prescription.



The devices are also certified as N95 filtering facepiece respirators by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). NIOSH certifies respirators for use in occupational settings in accordance with an appropriate respiratory protection program.

[\(Full Story\)](#)

CDC Recommends

Facemasks and Respirators Could Provide Added Value When Used in Combination with Other Preventive Measures

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released interim advice to the public about the use of facemasks and respirators in certain public (non-occupational) settings during an influenza pandemic. There is very little research about the value of masks to protect people in public settings. These interim recommendations are based on the best judgment of public health experts who relied in part on information about the protective value of masks in healthcare

facilities.

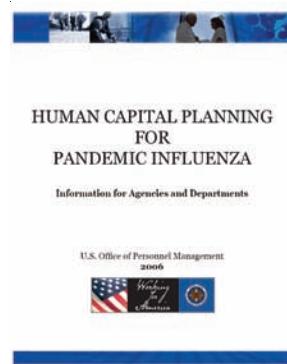
The guidance stresses that during an influenza pandemic a combination of actions will be needed, including hand washing, minimizing the likelihood of exposure by distancing people who are infected or likely to be infected with influenza away from others and treating them with antiviral medications, having people who are caring for ill family members voluntarily stay home, and encouraging people to avoid crowded places and large gatherings. When used in conjunction with such preventive steps, masks and respirators may help prevent some spread of influenza.

"Pandemic influenza remains a very real threat. We continue to look for ways to protect people and reduce the spread of disease," Secretary Mike Leavitt said. "The guidance is a good step forward in the broader, multifaceted federal effort to prepare the nation for an influenza pandemic." [\(Full Story\)](#)

Pass This On

Human Capital Management Policy for Pandemic Influenza

The President's Implementation Plan for the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza (Implementation Plan) called on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to provide guidance to Federal departments and agencies on human capital management and continuity of operations planning criteria related to pandemic influenza. ((guidance available by clicking on image to the right).



The guidance, *Human Capital Planning for Pandemic Influenza: Information for Agencies and Departments*, was prepared specifically with the possibility of a pandemic influenza in

New Three-Day Training Course Released Online

A [three-day training course](#) which provides a standardized curriculum to state and local public-health responders about how to identify and control human infections and illness associated with avian influenza A (H5N1) has been released on-line. The course, entitled "CDC/CSTE Rapid Response Training: The Role of Public Health in a Multi-Agency Response to Avian Influenza in the United States" is the result of a partnership between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE).

"We are pleased to release a new avian influenza training program that our state and local public-health partners can use to train rapid response teams," says Joshua Mott, an epidemiologist in CDC's Influenza Division who led the training development project. The training focuses on human health issues during an avian influenza investigation. Through lectures, reference materials and case studies, the course provides mechanisms to facilitate discussion and planning among people who may be called on to respond to avian influenza A (H5N1) in the United States.

The on-line version of this training was modified from regional "train the trainer" courses that were conducted in early 2007. These regional courses included 295 participants and facilitators and represented local and state health agencies, federal agencies, including CDC and United States Department of Agriculture, and representatives from the wildlife protection and agricultural sectors, public-health laboratories, public-health veterinarians, nursing and industry. ([Full Story](#))

mind; however, most of the information is equally applicable in other pandemic health crisis situations as well as in many other emergency situations.

The document presents policy guidance in a variety of formats, including comprehensive statements of policy guidance; fact sheets and guides intended for various audiences; planning guides for agencies, human resources professionals, and managers; and questions and answers. ([More Information](#))

Update on H5N1

Animal Situation Update:

On April 30, Bangladesh reported 9 new outbreaks of H5N1 in poultry. Seven outbreaks occurred in commercial layer farms, two in broiler farms and one in a backyard poultry farm. The source of the infection is unknown. Control measures have been implemented including movement control, stamping out and disinfection of the farms.

On May 3, Ghana reported its first outbreak of H5N1 in poultry. The affected farm produces layer hens and is located in the greater Accra region. Control measures have been put in place, and the affected poultry population has been destroyed. On May 7, Kuwait reported continuing outbreaks of H5N1 in poultry since their last report to in February. The reported outbreaks began in February and are reported through April 2007. The outbreaks took place on backyard farms and have affected a variety of avian species, including chickens, ducks, turkeys, guinea fowl and pigeons. [View the update on avian influenza in animals at the World Organization for Animal Health site.](#)

Where to Find More

Historical Analyses Help Plan for Future Pandemics

One of the persistent riddles of the deadly 1918 influenza pandemic is why it struck

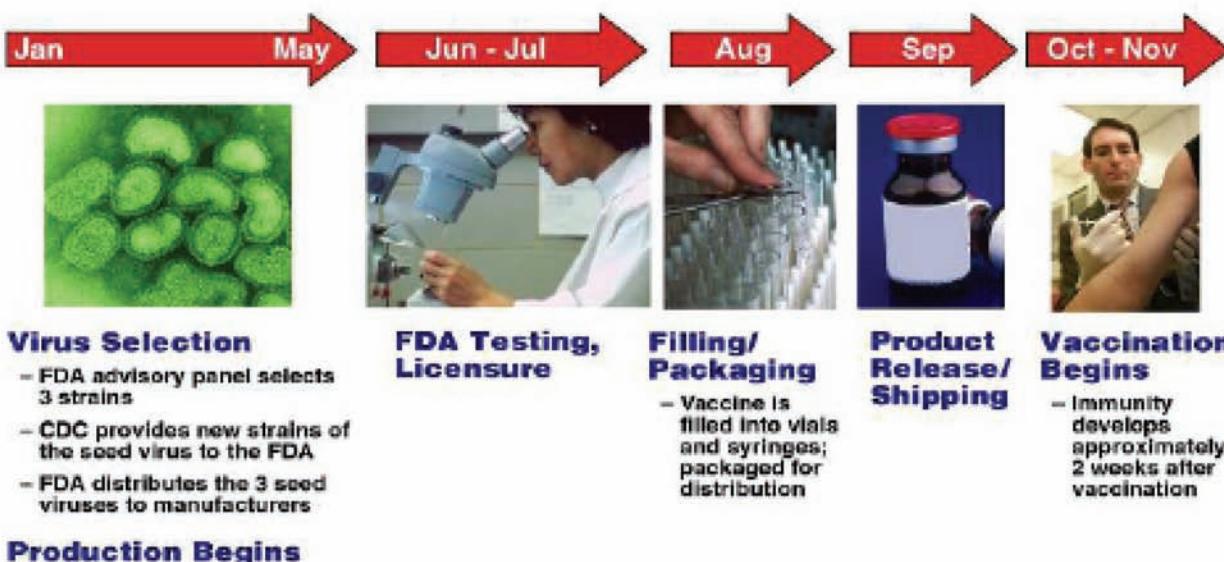
different cities with varying severity. Why were some municipalities such as St. Louis spared the fate of the hard-hit cities like Philadelphia when both implemented similar public health measures? What made the difference, according to two independent studies funded by the National Institutes of Health, was not only how but also how rapidly different cities responded.

Cities where public health officials imposed multiple social containment measures within

a few days after the first local cases were recorded cut peak weekly death rates by up to half compared with cities that waited just a few weeks to respond. Overall mortality was also lower in cities that implemented early interventions, but the effect was smaller. These conclusions—the results of systematic analyses of historical data to determine the effectiveness of public health measures in 1918—are described in two articles published online this week in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. ([Full Story](#))

Current Influenza Vaccine Production Timeline 6-9 months

Influenza Vaccine Production Timeline



Pandemic Influenza Update: Reader's Feedback

The monthly Pandemic Influenza Update is prepared by CDC's Priority Communication System and is intended for INTERNAL USE ONLY. Information in this newsletter is time sensitive and evolving. Readers are welcome to comment by email to: panupdate@cdc.gov